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Preps to hail damage under way on Atlantis' external tank

◆ **Shuttle Update:** On Friday, foam sanding was done on the nose cone area of **Atlantis'** external tank. Inspections for hail damage are finished for the solid rocket boosters and nearly complete for the orbiter, with 20 of 28 areas, all on the left side of the vehicle, already repaired.

◆ **ISS Update:** Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria and Flight Engineer Suni Williams have completed the last of the internal assembly tasks for the startup later this year of the new Oxygen Generation System, or OGS, in the Destiny laboratory. The astronauts installed sound-deadening equipment and an electrical cable, and reconnected a wastewater hose for the hardware that was delivered last summer on space shuttle mission STS-121. The OGS, which will be required once the station crew size expands to six people, is slated for activation during Expedition 15. It will function initially as another backup to the Russian Elektron system.

Expedition 14 crew members used their brains last week for scientific experiments. Lopez-Alegria and Williams conducted another session with the Anomalous Long-Term Effects in Astronauts' Central Nervous System experiment. It measures exposure to cosmic radiation.

For 90 minutes, each crew member wore an instrumented helmet containing six different particle detectors which measured radiation exposure,

brain electrical activity and visual perception. The experiment will further understanding of radiation impact on the human central nervous and visual systems, especially the phenomenon of crew members seeing flashes of light while in orbit.

U.S. and Russian station officials agreed last week on a plan to have the Expedition 14 crew relocate the Soyuz TMA-9 craft on March 29 from the Earth-facing port of the Zarya module to the aft port of the Zvezda module. This will alleviate the next station resident crew from having to perform the maneuver to reach Zarya as its final destination for the Expedition 15 increment.

■ **March 2007 Cardiovascular Disease Screening** — This month's screening window is 7 to 9 a.m. on Wednesday at the Occupational Health Facility. No appointment is necessary. You must fast for 12 hours prior to screening (water only). If you take prescription medications, ask your doctor how to manage these medications during your fasting.

The **new** 2-page questionnaire can be picked up at any medical facility. The questionnaire can also be downloaded at: <http://ksboc-forms/KSCForms2/ref/KSC28-1010V2.itr>.

If you have any questions, please call 867-3414 or 867-4566.

■ **Expanding Your Horizons** — For the 21st year in a row, the University of Central Florida College of

ISS crew prepares station for expanded crew size

Engineering and Computer Sciences is hosting a one-day conference designed to encourage interest in math, science and engineering among middle school girls. The EYH Conference will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 31.

Activities will include a keynote speaker from Universal Studios, a career panel of professional women, hands-on technical workshops, lunch and first-hand tours of UCF's exciting research labs. A simultaneous workshop for parents will include several presentations, such as "Raising Women Leaders," and a tour of UCF's laser research facility. The cost is \$10 per student/\$5 per parent. Register soon at the Web site, www.women.cecs.ucf.edu. Send questions to EYH@mail.ucf.edu.

■ **KSC Day With The Washington Nationals** — The Washington Nationals are offering discounted coupons to all KSC employees. Game-day discounts of \$2 to \$3 are for the Nationals vs. Detroit Tigers on March 23 at Space Coast Stadium. Game time is 1:05 p.m. Tickets will need to be purchased at the stadium, but you must bring a coupon to receive your discount. Coupons are available at all NASA Exchange stores **today**. For more information, please contact Lorie Austin at 867-7010.

■ **Did You Know?** Wednesday is the anniversary of Eli Whitney's patent of the cotton gin in 1794.

Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday for NASA KSC employees. Deadlines are 10 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. E-mail news to Anita.Barrett@jbsc.nasa.gov. For questions or information, e-mail or call 321-867-2815. Find KSC Countdown on the Internet at <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown-toc.html>.